

International Programs



Expanding Global Access to the World's Health Information

www.nlm.nih.gov/psd/ref/international.html

"Thank you for connecting us to the world." These words from a malaria researcher in Kenya reflect the view of persons around the globe who are being served by the international programs of the National Library of Medicine.

International partnerships strengthen and expand global access to the world's health literature. They chart new routes to biomedical knowledge and its use. They build bridges between individuals and cultures.

Since its earliest days, the Library has set its sights worldwide. John Shaw Billings, who took charge of the collection in 1865, turned to the international community as he built a world-class compilation of foreign medical books and journals. The strong international character of the NLM collection remains to this day. Its holdings are in over 80 languages and 57 percent of its journals are published abroad. Also, almost half of the users of MEDLINE/PubMed live outside the United States.

In keeping with its global focus, NLM created a network of International MEDLARS Centers in the 1960s. Now located in more than 20 countries, IMCs provide database training and information access to researchers, health care professionals and patients around the world.

www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/factsheets/intlmedlars.html

Targeting another area of opportunity, NLM has played a major role in the Multilateral Initiative on Malaria (MIM), which was launched in 1997 with the support of the National Institutes of Health. NLM initiated and led MIMCom, a communication and information program that has enabled African scientists and malaria researchers in 13 countries to have full access to the Internet and to medical literature. They can now connect with each other as well as with the international research community. MIM is a model for connectivity and communications in developing regions of the world. www.nlm.nih.gov/mimcom/

In partnership with the Pan American Health Organization and the Regional Disaster Information Center for Latin America and the Caribbean, NLM helped create and support the Central American Network for Disaster and Health Information (CANDHI). This disaster preparedness outreach program seeks to improve access to health-related disaster information in Central American countries that are vulnerable to hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters. <http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/outreach/outreachcandhi.html>.



NLM is a popular destination for the world's librarians, scientists and administrators, hosting tours for 6,500 visitors from over 50 nations every year.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES